

**From:** Darin Watkins <DWatkins@spokanerealtor.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 14, 2022 11:18 AM  
**To:** DES SBCC  
**Subject:** Residential Natural Gas Ban

External Email

As a sitting member of the residential TAG Group for the SBCC – I have raised the issue repeatedly about the need to complete a cost benefit analysis or a small business impact study on these code proposals, as required in the RCW's.

Specific to Spokane, there are a number of critical issues to consider:

- The electrical grid can't support a full ban on natural gas. Avista believes it would need to double its capacity to absorb a gas ban.
- In Spokane, any new electrical power generation will need to come from Natural Gas – which burns only 45-55% efficient, as compared with new home furnaces that are 95% efficient
- Avista believes we can save far more greenhouse gas emissions through weatherization and upgrading furnaces that we can eliminating new gas hook ups.
- There is no coherent plan to replace the natural gas energy that total electrification will require – leading to more blackouts and price hikes to businesses and ratepayers.
- In Spokane, the planned conversion to heat pumps is a laudable goal – yet heat pumps do NOT work well in our climate (under 30-degrees, or over 90-degrees)
- We are facing the worst housing crisis in Washington State's history. We currently rank 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the number of housing units per capita. Spokane is also among the worst cities in the nation for housing – some 25,000 housing units short for the City alone. We must do everything we can to add to the affordability of homes, now – without compromising efficiency, which is already among the highest building code standards in the US
- We can save far more greenhouse gas emissions in Spokane, by building more homes where people work and go to school – instead of pushing buyers into Idaho where there is far more availability. Instead, we are seeing daily car traffic nearly double every few years.
- There are no exemptions for those working to produce low income housing. It makes no sense to add \$5,000 solar ready electrical panels and garage plug in stations for electric cars for those who are barely able to afford rent

Should this proposal STILL go forward, I ask that you consider exemptions for those working to provide low-income housing, and for border counties faced with enormous greenhouse gas emissions from commuters finding available housing in state's with far less building restrictions.

**Darin Watkins**  
Governmental Affairs Director  
Spokane Association of REALTORS®  
(509) 595-2012 (cell)